

Claims

- SubA2 1. Pay-per-use communication device, in particular for television pictures, of the type comprising:
- 5       - a first input interface (E1) for receiving first scrambled signals, bearing first information subject to pay-per-use,
- 10       - first processing means able to undertake the conversion of the first scrambled signals into first descrambled signals, capable of direct use,
- 15       - an access control module (1) able to cooperate with a memory card (CA) comprising a user identifier associated with access entitlements, and conditioning the operation of the first processing means, and
- 20       - a first output interface (S1) for delivering the first descrambled signals with a view to direct use,
- characterized in that it further comprises:
- 25       - at least one second input interface (E2) for receiving second scrambled signals, bearing second information subject to pay-per-use and to which the said memory card (CA) is able furthermore to provide access entitlements,
- 30       - at least second processing means able to undertake the conversion of the second scrambled signals into second descrambled signals, capable of direct use, and
- 35       - at least one second output interface (S2) for delivering the second descrambled signals,
- and in that the access control module (1) is able to cooperate with the memory card (CA) so as to condition the operation of the second processing means with a view to further allowing the conversion of the second scrambled signals.
2. Device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the first and second processing means respectively comprise first and second management means (10,

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- 20) for driving the respective conversions of the first and second scrambled signals, and in that the first management means (10, 20) are arranged so as to talk to the access control module (1) so as to activate the conversion of the first scrambled signals, whilst the second management means (20) are arranged so as to talk to the access control module (1) by way of the said first management means (10), with a view to activating the conversion of the second scrambled signals.
3. Device according to Claim 2, characterized in that the first management means (10) are devised, on the one hand, to receive from the access control module (1), at predetermined time intervals, first and second control messages (CW1, CW2), for the respective conversions of the first and second scrambled signals, and, on the other hand, to transmit the said second control messages (CW) to the second management means (20).
4. Device according to Claim 3, characterized in that the first and second management means respectively comprise a first (10) and a second (20) processor, which are devised so as to respectively drive first and second descrambling modules (16, 26) for descrambling the first and second scrambled signals.
5. Device according to Claim 4, taken in combination with one of Claims 2 and 3, characterized in that the first processor (10) is able to drive the second processor (20) according to a protocol of the master/slave type.
6. Device according to one of Claims 4 and 5, characterized in that the first and second input interfaces (E1, E2) are linked to means for receiving radiofrequency waves (9), and in that

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the first and second processing means respectively comprise demodulation/demultiplexing stages (12, 13, 22, 23) for the first and second scrambled signals, able to cooperate respectively with the first and second descrambling modules (16, 26) so as respectively to descramble first and second scrambled, demodulated and demultiplexed signals.

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7. Device according to Claim 6, characterized in that the first and second scrambled signals bear moving picture data, compressed according to a predetermined format, and in that the first and second processing means furthermore comprise video decoding/encoding modules (14, 15, 24, 25), able to cooperate with the demodulation/demultiplexing stages (12, 13, 22, 23), so as to deliver picture data intended for direct use.

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8. Device according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the first and second output interfaces (S1, S2) are linked to means of direct use, comprising a television (TV) and/or a video recorder (MG).

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9. Device according to one of Claims 6 to 8, characterized in that the first and second processing means comprise (LNB) frequency converters each adapted to a polarization of the radiofrequency waves transmitted by a satellite.